

PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT – Householder Developments

Case Officer: Harriet Fuller

Parish: Berry Pomeroy

Application No: 2453/22/HHO

Applicant:

Jo Sweett
36 Furze Road
Totnes
TQ9 5YE

Site Address: 36 Furze Road, Totnes, TQ9 5YE

Development: Householder application for proposed single storey front extension



Reason item is being put before Committee: Applicant is Cllr Sweett, Ward Councillor for Totnes.

Recommendation: Refusal

Reasons for refusal

1. The proposed development, by virtue of its scale and mono-pitched design, does not respect the pattern of development within the existing street scene, and would represent an incongruous addition to the locality in this regard, contrary to policy DEV20 of the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (2014-2034) and paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

Officer will provide update on outstanding drainage comment at Committee.

Site Description:

The site is a semi-detached two storey property at the end of the Furze Road cul-de-sac in Bridgetown, Totnes. The existing dwelling includes a single-storey flat roof projection from the front elevation which extends approximately half way across the property. The building is rendered on the ground floor and tiled at the first floor. It has an asymmetrical roof with gable end on the detached elevation. The site has amenity space to the front and rear.

The proposal:

The application proposes a front extension which would extend across the entire front elevation. It would be of a mono-pitched design, with the pitch adjoining the existing dwelling at the bottom sills of the first floor windows. The proposed extension would be approximately 10cm smaller in depth than the existing front extension.

Consultations:

- County Highways Authority: No Highways Implications
- Town/Parish Council: "*Berry Pomeroy Parish Council met last night [04/10/2022] and approved the above application*"
There was also support from Totnes Council as the neighbouring parish.
- Drainage: No objections are raised and recommend an informative:
Comments
The increase in impermeable area generated by the proposed development is less than 15m². The information provided indicates that there is sufficient space on site for a soakaway to manage the small amount of additional surface water generated. Unless there are concerns raised as part of the application no further drainage details are required at this time.

Informative

Please be aware that Infiltration rates within, or near, flood zones 2/3 can be variable and raised groundwater levels can be found. It is advised that infiltration testing and groundwater monitoring (appropriate for the size of the soakaway) should be undertaken, and the results of such testing used to inform the drainage design. Failure to complete such testing could result in failure of the drainage systems and place the development approved by this consent and surrounding property at risk of flooding. Should the development proceed without adequate drainage provision, this will be at the developers own risk.

Representations:

Two letters of representation has been received. One supports the application and one raises no objection. The comments refer to the design of the extension being an improvement, fitting in with/being similar to surrounding houses.

Relevant Planning History

Planning application reference	Proposal	Site address	Decision
03/1157/74/1	Housing development.	Courtfield & Mansbridge Road Totnes	Withdrawn

03/1150/75/3	a) Construction of roads and foul/surface water drainage for residential development on O.S. 5100, 5224, 5796, 5800, 5919, 6100, 6708 and 6917; (b) Construction of sewage treatment plant and associated sewerage; (c) Erection of Phase I of the development comprising 92 dwellings;(d) Provision of public open space (O.S. 4913)	Lower Weston Weston Lane Totnes (Berry Pomeroy Parish)	Conditional Approval
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ANALYSIS

Principle of Development/Sustainability:

01. The site is an existing residential property which includes a single-storey flat roof integrated outbuilding to the front of the dwelling, which was included in the original design of the property and neighbouring dwellings. It is in Furze Road which features several properties which have been altered and extended over time.

02. The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) guides Officers in suggesting that front extensions which project forwards of the front elevation will generally be resisted. Notwithstanding this, the SPD notes that exceptions may be allowed where front extensions are a feature of houses in the street. Whilst the existing flat-roof area to the front of the house is part of the original dwelling and not a later extension, it does lead Officers to conclude that a small-scale addition to the front elevation could be accommodated, as long as the scale and design remain in keeping with the appearance of the property and neighbouring pairs of dwellings.

03. Given the existing building line of the site and the direct neighbouring properties, the principle of a front extension is acceptable.

Design/Landscape:

04. The site is not located within any special areas of designation. Due to the highway arrangement at the end of Furze road, the front elevation of the site and its close neighbours are clearly visible from the highway and public footpath through to the Rush Way play area, and the 'Chicken Run' footpath through Bridgetown. The uniformity of the existing three sets of semi-detached properties, (with the site being part of the middle of the three) contributes to the character of the street scene and local pattern of development.

05. The proposed front extension introduces a pitched roof. Due to the height of the proposal, the top of the roof would attach to the property directly underneath the bottom sills of the existing first floor windows. As a result, the extension would dominate the front elevation of the site. The site and its adjacent properties are uniform and are rendered at ground floor with hanging tiles at first floor level. The existing flat roof projection on the property does not impact this pattern of architecture when read from the road. The proposed extension would interrupt the uniformity found at numbers 34 to 39 Furze Road and would be an incongruous addition to the property and immediate street scene.

06. The proposed design therefore fails to have regard for the local pattern of development and would not conserve the local distinctiveness of the built environment in this location. As such, the proposal fails to comply with policy DEV20 of the Joint Local Plan.

07. The applicant has provided examples of where pitched roofs have been built in nearby areas including Dukes Road and Rush Way. Whilst each application is considered on its own merits, applications must be assessed against the current policies, and Officers would note that several of the

extensions with pitched roofs were approved prior to the adoption of the Joint Local Plan, and subject to different policy considerations. Furthermore, when considering the street scene and existing built environment, the impact of the proposal would be greatest to the southern area of Furze Road, where there are currently no front extensions with pitched roofs within this row of houses. Properties on the northern side of the street do have mono-pitched porches, or canopy roofs, however these are also fairly uniform for their part of the street. Officers would also note that these porches are of a significantly smaller scale and lower height than the current proposal. The impact of these pitched roof porches is significantly less than an extension which is the full width of the property and extends to the first floor windows in height.

Neighbour Amenity:

08. There is a degree of mutual overlooking of the amenity spaces between the site and properties to the east and west (numbers 35 and 37 Furze Road). The proposal would not afford the applicant with the ability to overlook neighbouring properties when compared to the existing levels of privacy.

09. The proposed extension introduces a pitched roof extending across the width of the property. Whilst there are no windows proposed on the east elevation which borders the adjoining neighbour at 37 Furze Road, the structure would be approximately 1.1 metres taller than the existing front extension and would border the amenity space of number 37 Furze Road. Officers have some concerns that the scale of the proposed extension could have an overbearing impact to number 37 Furze Road, impacting on the enjoyment of the front amenity space. However, on balance and considering the aspect of the properties, Officers consider that the proposal would not have a significant impact on neighbouring properties, so as to warrant refusing the application on this consideration. As such, the proposal complies with the requirement of policy DEV1 of the Joint Local Plan.

Ecology:

10. The application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Assessment relating to bats and nesting birds which raises no concerns. Had the proposal been acceptable in all other regards, a condition would have been recommended to follow the recommendations of the Ecology Report.

Highways/Access:

11. There are no Highways or access concerns. The Highways Authority have responded to the consultation to advise that there are no highways implications posed as a result of the proposal.

Drainage:

12. The site is located within a Critical Drainage Area and partially within flood zones 2 and 3 associated with a small stream to the south of the site. The scale and nature of development is considered acceptable in this case, and the scale of the extension would not impact upon the flow of water during a flood event. The proposal would also be located upon an area of hardstanding. Officers are awaiting the response from the Council's Drainage Officer, which will be provided verbally at the Planning Committee.

Conclusion:

13. The principle of development is acceptable. The proposal would not impact upon the amenity of neighbours or affect highway users. There are no concerns regarding the use of the site for bats or nesting birds. However, the design of the current proposed development is considered to be an incongruous addition to the property and immediate street scene, and fails to have proper regard to the local pattern of development. As such the proposal fails to comply with the requirements of policy DEV20 and is recommended for refusal on this basis.

This application has been considered in accordance with Section 38 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Planning Policy

Relevant policy framework

Section 70 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act requires that regard be had to the development plan, any local finance and any other material considerations. Section 38(6) of the 2004 Planning and Compensation Act requires that applications are to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For the purposes of decision making, as of March 26th 2019, the Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014 - 2034 is now part of the development plan for Plymouth City Council, South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council (other than parts of South Hams and West Devon within Dartmoor National Park).

On 26 March 2019 of the Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan was adopted by all three of the component authorities. Following adoption, the three authorities jointly notified the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)* of their choice to monitor the Housing Requirement at the whole plan level. This is for the purposes of the Housing Delivery Test (HDT) and the 5 Year Housing Land Supply assessment. A letter from MHCLG to the Authorities was received on 13 May 2019 confirming the change.

On 13th January 2021 MHCLG published the HDT 2020 measurement. This confirmed the Plymouth, South Hams and West Devon's joint HDT measurement as 144% and the consequences are "None".

Therefore a 5% buffer is applied for the purposes of calculating a 5 year land supply at a whole plan level. When applying the 5% buffer, the combined authorities can demonstrate a 5-year land supply of 5.8 years at end March 2021 (the 2021 Monitoring Point). This is set out in the Plymouth, South Hams & West Devon Local Planning Authorities' Housing Position Statement 2021 (published 12th November 2021).

[*now known as Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities]

The relevant development plan policies are set out below:

The Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan was adopted by South Hams District Council on March 21st 2019 and West Devon Borough Council on March 26th 2019.

SPT1 Delivering sustainable development
SPT2 Sustainable linked neighbourhoods and sustainable rural communities
SPT12 Strategic approach to the natural environment
TTV1 Prioritising growth through a hierarchy of sustainable settlements
TTV2 Delivering sustainable development in the Thriving Towns and Villages Policy Area
TTV3 Strategic infrastructure measures for the Main Towns
DEV1 Protecting health and amenity
DEV2 Air, water, soil, noise, land and light
DEV8 Meeting local housing need in the Thriving Towns and Villages Policy Area
DEV9 Meeting local housing need in the Plan Area
DEV10 Delivering high quality housing
DEV20 Place shaping and the quality of the built environment
DEV23 Landscape character
DEV26 Protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geological conservation
DEV28 Trees, woodlands and hedgerows
DEV32 Delivering low carbon development
DEV35 Managing flood risk and Water Quality Impacts

Neighbourhood Plan

The site is located within the neighbourhood plan area of Berry Pomeroy. The Berry Pomeroy Neighbourhood Plan is at Designation Stage. As such there are no neighbourhood plan policies against which to review the application.

Other material considerations include the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and guidance in Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). Additionally, the following planning documents are also material considerations in the determination of the application:

Plymouth and South West Devon Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2020

Considerations under Human Rights Act 1998 and Equalities Act 2010

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equalities Act 2010 have been taken into account in reaching the recommendation contained in this report.